

their knowledge. Then the myth-building imagination invented stories of great virtue or guilt to account for the prosperity or calamity.<sup>1</sup> The Greek notion of the Nemesis was an inference from observation of good and ill fortune in life. Great popular interest attached to the stories of Crcesus and Polycrates. The latter, after all his glory and prosperity, was crucified by the satrap of Lydia. Crcesus had done all that man could do, according to the current religion, to conciliate the gods and escape ill fortune. He was very pious and lived by the rules of religion. The story is told in different forms. "The people could not make up their minds that a prince who had been so liberal to the gods during his prosperity had been abandoned by them at the moment when he had the greatest need of their aid."<sup>2</sup> They said that he expiated the crime of his ancestor Gyges, who usurped the throne; that is, they found it necessary to adduce some guilt to account for the facts, and they introduced the notion of hereditary responsibility. Another story was that he determined to sacrifice all his wealth to the gods. He built a funeral pyre of it all and mounted it himself, but rain extinguished it. The gods were satisfied. Crcesus afterwards enjoyed the friendship of Cyros, which was good fortune. Still others rejected the doctrines of correlation between goodness and happiness on account of the fate of Croesus. In ancient religion "the benefits which were expected from the gods were of a public character, affecting the whole community, especially fruitful seasons, increase of flocks and herds, and success in war. So long as the community flourished, the fact that an individual was miserable reflected no discredit on divine providence, but was rather taken to prove that the sufferer was an evil-doer, justly hateful to the gods."<sup>3</sup> Jehu and his house were blamed for the blood spilt at Israel, although Jehu was commissioned by Elisha to destroy the house of Ahab.<sup>4</sup> This is like the case of QEdipus, who obeyed an oracle, but suffered for his act as for a crime. Jehovah caused the ruin of those who had displeased him, by putting false oracles in the mouths of prophets.<sup>5</sup> Hezekiah expostulated with God because, although he had walked before God with a perfect heart and had done what was right in His sight, he suffered calamity.<sup>6</sup> In the seventy-third Psalm, the author is perplexed by the prosperity of the wicked, and the con-

trast of his own fortunes. " Surely in vain have I cleansed  
 my heart and  
 washed my hands in innocency, for all day long have I been  
 plagued, and  
 chastened every morning." He says that at last the wicked  
 were cast down.  
 He was brutish and ignorant not to see the solution. It is  
 that the wicked  
 prosper for a time only. He will cleave unto God. The book  
 of Job is a  
 discussion of the relation between goodness and  
 happiness. The crusaders

<sup>1</sup> Pietschmann, *Phoenizier*, 115. <sup>2</sup> Maspero, *Peuples de VOrient*, III, 618.

<sup>8</sup> W. R. Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, 259.

<sup>4</sup> Hosea i. 4 ; 2 Kings ix. 8.

<sup>5</sup> i Kings xxii. 22; Judges ix. 23; Ezek. xiv. 9; 2 Thess. ii. n.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Kings aar. 3.